

Listing of the Claims

1. (Previously Presented) A method of providing patron service at a venue, comprising the steps of:
providing, to a plurality of patrons, a patron unit in communication with one more central computer systems, each of said patron units providing the functions of:

providing an interactive display;

allowing a patron to input a request;

displaying the status of open requests for said patron;

sending a location or other identifier to said central computers; and

receiving and displaying information from said central computers;

providing, to a plurality of staff, a portable staff unit in communication with said one or more central computer systems, each of said staff units providing the functions of:

providing an interactive display;

sending requests to said central computers for information regarding requests or patrons;

viewing outstanding requests and their status from one or more of said patron units;

displaying a map showing the location of one or more of said patron units;

displaying information regarding past requests from particular patrons;

allowing a staff member to update the status of an outstanding patron request; and

allowing a staff member to input requests for patrons; and

providing one or more central computer systems, said one or more central computer systems providing the functions of:

identifying a plurality of patron units by location or a specific identifier;

receiving and processing requests from a plurality of patrons via said plurality of patron units;

storing information regarding past requests from each patron;

receiving and processing requests from a plurality of staff; and
interfacing with an external point of sale system.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising offering, via said patron units, at least one service selected from a group consisting of interactive video games, music, movies, internet access, voice and telephony access.

3. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said processing requests step comprises the step of routing said requests to appropriate fulfillment centers.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 3, further comprising the step of notifying staff responsible for a particular order via their portable staff units when specific requests are completed or ready for delivery from the appropriate fulfillment centers to the patrons.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said patron units allow patrons to page staff members assigned to that patron.

6. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said patrons can request bills via said patron units.

7. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said portable staff units display the status of open requests which are assigned to a particular staff member.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step of receiving and displaying information from said central computers includes displaying goods and services offered by the venue on the patron units.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step of receiving and displaying information from said central computers includes displaying cross-sell and/or up-sell recommendations based on previous requests made by the patrons.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step of receiving and displaying information from said central computers includes displaying advertisements on the patron units.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said advertisements are appurtenant to the request made by the patrons on the patron units.

13-38. (Cancelled)

39. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a patron unit at a venue to perform the functions of:
linking the patron unit to a network provided by a said venue;
displaying information associated with said venue;
enabling a patron to submit a request;
transmitting said request to a one or more central computers for processing; and
sending location information from the patron unit to said central computers.

40. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 39, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct the patron unit to display an item previously ordered by the patron to enable the patron to reorder the previously ordered item.

41. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 39, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct the patron unit to display preference information regarding a patron.

42. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 39, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct the patron unit to display an estimate of the time to completion of a pending request.

43. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 39, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct the patron unit to authenticate the patron before the request is fulfilled.

44. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 39, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct the portable patron unit to enable the patron to page a staff member assigned to that patron.

45-46. (Cancelled)

47. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 39, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct the portable patron unit to display cross-sell and/or up-sell recommendations based upon the patron's request or upon past requests by the patron.

48. (Cancelled)

49. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 39, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable patron unit to display advertisements appurtenant to the patron's request.

50. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit at a venue to perform the functions of:

displaying notification of when a request is ready for delivery to a patron;

displaying details of a patron's request;

displaying details about the patron, including at least one of the following: name of the patron, room number of patron, preference information of the patron, special needs/requests of the patron, and/or information associated with the patron from prior visits to a venue; and
displaying a location of a portable patron unit used to make the request .

51. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 50, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit to indicate whether a request for a patron has been completed.

52. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 50, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit to display a request from a patron assigned to a particular staff member.

53. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 50, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit to display requests assigned to a particular zone of responsibility.

54. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 50, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit to display patrons that are logged into a network for the venue.

55. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 50, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit to display real-time activity of a patron which is performed concurrently on a portable patron device.

56. (Cancelled)

57. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 50, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit to display a request from a patron for delivery of the patron's bill.

58. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 50, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit to display messages received from venue management.

59. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a central computer at a venue to perform the functions of:

- communicating with a plurality of portable patron units and portable staff units;
- distributing content to the portable patron units and the portable staff units;
- storing information regarding previous requests made by individual patrons;
- receiving requests from the portable patron units and the portable staff units; and
- processing the requests from the portable patron units and the portable staff units.

60. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein the content includes menus for ordering items.

61. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein the content includes services offered by the venue.

62. (Original) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein the content includes advertisements.

63. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein the content includes a history of requests previously made by a particular patron, said history being stored on said central computer.

64. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein the content includes information associated with a particular patron.

65. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein the content includes a status of open requests which are assigned to a particular staff member.

66.(Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein said request is selected from a group consisting of ordering an item, requesting a service, requesting information associated with the venue and requesting a bill.

67. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a said central computer to communicate with a fulfillment center computer.

68. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 59, further comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a said central computer to notify a the portable staff unit of the responsible staff member when an order is ready for delivery from a fulfillment center.

69. (Previously Presented) A portable patron unit for use in a venue comprising:

a display unit;

a user interface for display on said display unit, configured to enable a patron while in a public area of a said venue, to interactively order an item and/or request a service offered by the venue; and

a communication unit, configured to connect said portable patron unit to a network to transmit the patron's location and order to a central computer.

70. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein said portable patron unit is a dedicated device capable of being handheld and carried by the patron said portable patron unit being provided to the patron upon checking into the venue or after the patron enters a particular public area of the venue.

71. (Original) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the portable patron unit is configured to be secured to furniture used by the patron while in a particular public area of the venue.

72. (Original) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the display device is large enough to enable a patron with myopia to read information displayed on the user interface without having to use corrective optical lenses.

73. (Original) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the display device is touch-screen display device.

74. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, further including packaging, configured to provide protection against the sun and other contaminants.

75. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to display an item previously ordered by the patron to enable the patron to reorder the previously ordered item.

76. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to display preference information of the patron, special needs/requests of the patron, and/or information associated with the patron from prior visits to the venue.

77. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to display an estimate of the time to completion of a pending order.

78. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to authenticate the patron before the order and/or service is fulfilled.

79. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the unit allows the patron to page a staff member assigned to that patron.

80. (Cancelled)

81. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to display messages to the patron.

82. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to display goods and services offered by the venue.

83. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to display cross-sell and/or up-sell recommendations based on the item ordered and/or service requested by the patron, or upon previous requests from the patron.

84. (Cancelled)

85. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is configured to display advertisements appurtenant to the patron's request.

86. (Previously Presented) A portable staff unit, comprising:

a display unit;

a user interface for display on the display unit, said user interface being configured to perform actions selected from a group consisting of enabling a staff member to view details about a patron's order, showing a location of a portable patron unit used to make the patron's order, notifying a staff member when an order is ready for delivery and delivery to a patron, showing details about a patron, including at least one of the following: name of the patron; room number of patron; showing preference information of the patron; showing special needs/requests of the patron; and/or information associated with the patron from prior visits to venue; and

a communication unit, configured to connect the portable staff unit to a network.

87. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit as recited in claim 86, wherein the user interface is configured to allow a staff member to indicate whether an order has been delivered to the patron.

88. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit as recited in claim 86, wherein the user interface is configured to display information specifying a quantity of orders assigned to a particular staff member.

89. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit as recited in claim 86, wherein the user interface is configured to display information specifying a quantity of orders assigned to a particular zone of responsibility for the portable staff unit.

90. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit as recited in claim 86, wherein the user interface is configured to display information specifying a quantity of patrons that are logged onto a network for the venue.

91. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit as recited in claim 86, wherein the user interface is configured to display actions performed by patrons using their portable patron units as the actions are being performed by the patrons in real-time.

92. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit as recited in claim 86, wherein the user interface configured to display information specifying when a notification/page is received from a patron requesting service from the staff member assigned to that patron.

93. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit as recited in claim 86, wherein the user interface is configured to display information specifying when a notification/page is received indicating when a patron has requested delivery of their bill.

94-109. (Cancelled)

110. (Previously Presented) A method for a portable staff unit used in a venue comprising the steps of:

displaying notification of when an order is ready for delivery and delivery of the order to a patron;

displaying details of the order;

displaying details about the patron, including at least one piece of information selected from a group consisting of the name of the patron, the room number of patron, the seat number of the patron, preference information of the patron, special needs/requests of the patron, and information associated with the patron from prior visits to the venue; and

displaying a location of a portable patron unit used to place the order.

111. (Cancelled)

112. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 110 further comprising the step of displaying orders assigned to particular staff members.

113. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 110 further comprising the step of displaying orders assigned to a particular zone of responsibility.

114. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 110 further comprising the step of displaying a quantity of patrons actively logged onto a wireless network for the venue.

115. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 110 further comprising the step of displaying actions performed by patrons using their portable patron units as the actions are being performed by the patrons in real-time.

116. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 110 further comprising the step of displaying a notification/page from a patron to which the staff member is assigned requesting service.

117. (Cancelled)

118. (Previously Presented) A method comprising the steps of:

- providing patron units to patrons for use in a stadium/arena, the patron units having a communication link connecting said patron units to a network and interactive display screens;

- enabling patrons to order items, request services and/or browse information associated with the stadium/resort via the patron units;

- providing portable staff units to staff members of the stadium/resort, the portable staff units being wireless devices having interactive display screens;

- enabling staff members to view information about orders and/or requests made by the patrons via the portable staff units; and

providing locations of the patron units to enable the staff members to deliver the items ordered and/or services requested directly to the patrons.

119. (Cancelled)

120. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit at a venue to perform the functions of:

- displaying notification of when an order is ready for delivery and delivery of the order to a patron;

- displaying details of the order;

- displaying details about the patron, including at least one of the following: name of the patron, seat number of the patron, preference information of the patron, special needs/requests of the patron, and/or information associated with the patron from prior visits to a particular stadium/arena; ~~and~~

- displaying a location of a portable patron unit used to place the order; and

- allowing the entry of an order for a patron.

121. (Cancelled)

122. (Previously Presented) A portable patron unit[,] comprising:

- a display unit;

- a user interface for display on the display unit, said user interface being configured to enable a patron while in a stadium/arena to interactively order an item and/or request a service offered by the stadium/arena; and

- a communication unit, configured to connect the portable patron unit to a network to determine where in the stadium/arena the portable patron unit is located

- wherein the portable patron unit is a dedicated device capable of being handheld and carried by the patron and/or a staff member; and

- further wherein the portable patron unit is provided to the patron upon entering the stadium/arena or after the patron enters a particular area of the stadium/arena.

123. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 122, wherein the display device is touch-screen display device.

124. (Previously Presented) A method for a portable staff unit used in a stadium/arena comprising the steps of:

- displaying notification of when an order is ready for delivery and delivery of the order to a patron;

- displaying details of the order;

- displaying details about the patron, including at least one of the following: name of the patron, seat/location of the patron, preference information of the patron, special needs/requests of the patron, and/or information associated with the patron from prior visits to the stadium/arena; and

- displaying a location of a portable patron unit used to place the order.

125. (Previously Presented) A method comprising the steps of:

- providing portable patron units to patrons for use in an establishment, the portable patron units being wireless devices having interactive display screens;

- enabling patrons to wirelessly order items, request services, and/or browse information associated with the establishment via the portable patron units;

- providing portable staff units to staff members of the establishment, the portable staff units being wireless devices having interactive display screens;

- enabling staff members to view information about orders and/or requests made by the patrons via the portable staff units; and

- providing locations of the portable patron units to enable the staff members to deliver the items ordered and/or services requested directly to the patrons.

126. (Cancelled)

127. (Previously Presented) One or more computer-readable media comprising computer executable instructions that, when executed, direct a portable staff unit at a venue to perform the functions of:

displaying notification of when an order is ready for delivery and delivery of the order to a patron;

displaying details of the order;

displaying details about the patron, including at least one of the following: name of the patron, seat number of the patron, preference information of the patron, special needs/requests of the patron, and/or information associated with the patron from prior visits to a particular establishment; and

displaying a location of a portable patron unit used to place the order.

128. (Cancelled)

129. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the patron units are mounted to other items.

130. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the patron units are mounted to chairs.

131. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the patron units are mounted to tables.

132. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the patron unit storing data indicative of a location of the patron unit.

133. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 132, wherein the data indicative of the location comprises a room number.

134. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising enabling the patron unit to authenticate a patron using the patron unit.

135. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 134, wherein the authentication comprises enabling the patron unit to accept a biometric sample of the patron.

136. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 135 wherein said biometric sample is a fingerprint.

137-138. (Cancelled)

139. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit as recited in claim 69, wherein the user interface is further configured to authenticate the patron before the order and/or service is fulfilled via a biometric sample.

140. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 118 wherein the patron units are mounted to chairs.

141. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 121 wherein the patron units are mounted to chairs.

142. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit of claim 69 wherein said communication link to said network is a wireless link.

143. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit of claim 142 wherein the location of said portable patron unit is determined by a wireless link to one or more network access points and subsequently transmitted to said central computer via said wireless communication link.

144. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit of claim 69 further comprising:
a GPS receiver;
wherein the location of the portable patron unit is determined via said GPS receiver and transmitted to said central computer.

145. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit of claim 69 wherein the location of said portable patron unit is input directly to the unit and further wherein said location information is subsequently transmitted to said central computer.

146. (Previously Presented) The portable staff unit of claim 86 wherein said communication link to said network is a wireless link.

147. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 118 wherein said communication link connecting said patron units to said network is wireless.

148. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit of claim 122 wherein said communication link to said network is a wireless link.

149. (Previously Presented) The portable patron unit of claim 148 wherein the location of said portable patron unit is transmitted to said central computer via said wireless communication link.

150. (New) A method of providing patron service at a venue, comprising the steps of:
providing, to a plurality of patrons, a patron unit in communication via an intranet with one or more central computer systems, each of said patron units providing the functions of:

- allowing a patron to input an order for goods and services;

- displaying the status of open orders for said patron; and

- sending a location or other identifier to said central computers;

providing, to a plurality of staff, a portable staff unit in communication via an intranet with said one or more central computer systems, each of said staff units providing the functions of:

- providing a touchscreen display;

- allowing a staff member to request information regarding patron's outstanding orders using said touchscreen display;

- allowing a staff member enter orders received from patrons using said touchscreen display; and

providing one or more central computer systems, said one or more central computer systems in communication with a plurality of patron units and a plurality of staff units via an intranet providing the functions of:

- identifying a plurality of patron units by location or a specific identifier;
- receiving and processing orders from said plurality of patron units;
- receiving and processing requests from said plurality of staff units; and
- interfacing with an external point of sale system.

151. (New) A method for providing patron service at a venue, comprising the steps of:

providing one or more central computer systems in communication with a plurality of patron units and a plurality of staff units via a TCP/IP based network;

providing a plurality of patrons with patron units, said patron units providing the functions of:

- communicating with said central computer systems via a TCP/IP based network;
- accepting orders for goods or services from said patrons; and
- sending location information to said central computers;

providing a plurality of staff members with portable staff units in communication via a TCP/IP based network with one or more central computer systems, each of said staff units providing the functions of:

- providing an interactive touch screen display;
- allowing said staff members to monitor activities of said patrons entered using said patron units; and
- allowing a staff member enter orders or requests received from patrons using said interactive touch screen display.

152. (New) The method of claim 151 wherein said one or more central computer systems includes a point of sale capability or interfaces to an external point of sale capability.

153. (New) A method for providing patron service at a venue, comprising the steps of:

- providing one or more central computer systems in communication with a plurality of patron units and a plurality of staff units via a TCP/IP based network;

- downloading a patron unit software application to patron-supplied hardware, said software application allowing said patron-supplied hardware to provide the functions of:

 - communicating with said central computer systems via TCP/IP based network;

 - accepting orders for goods or services from said patrons; and

 - sending location information to said central computers;

- providing a plurality of staff members with portable staff units in communication via a TCP/IP based network with one or more central computer systems, each of said staff units providing the functions of:

 - providing an interactive touch screen display;

 - allowing said staff members to monitor activities of said patrons entered using said patron units; and

 - allowing a staff member enter orders or requests received from patrons using said interactive touch screen display.

154. (New) The method of claim 153 wherein said one or more central computer systems includes a point of sale capability or interfaces to an external point of sale capability.